Mr. J. C. Nauen

John Charles Nauen came to Singapore in July 1935 as an Assistant Curator of the Gardens. He had previously served seven years in Bermuda after completing his training as a Student Gardener at Kew. He remained in Singapore until July 1939, when he was placed in charge of the Waterfall Gardens, Penang. When the Japanese attacked Malaya in December 1941, Mr. Nauen was mobilized as Sergeant in the Penang Volunteer Force, and as such was taken prisoner in Singapore in February 1942. He was subsequently sent to work on the Siam-Burma railway, where he died as a result of blood poisoning in October 1943.

Mr. Nauen was an officer of outstanding ability; and as a man he was held in affection and esteem by all who knew him. He had a very wide knowledge of garden plants and their management, excellent judgment in their use and arrangement, and a great gift in garden design. He devoted much thought to his administrative work and to the welfare and training of those who worked under him. He helped considerably to raise the standard of horticultural work in the Gardens both at Singapore and Penang. He devoted much time and thought to the roadside trees of Singapore. He helped to found a Gardening Society in Singapore, and did good service as its first Secretary. He was the leading spirit in the organization of the Society's Flower Shows, which were a stimulus to professional and amateur growers alike. His alert mind, his sense of humour, his human sympathy, and his integrity of purpose are the characters by which we remember him. His untimely death is a great loss to Malaya.